

Appl. No. : 10/645,984
Filed : August 22, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 15-21 remain pending in the present Application, Claims 3-14 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been added. The claims set forth above include marking to show the changes made by way of the present amendment, deletions being in ~~strikeout~~ or [[double brackets]] and additions being underlined.

In response to the Office Action dated December 7, 2006, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider the above-captioned Application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments.

Claims 3-7, 9-11, and 13 Are Not Anticipated or Made Obvious By The Cited References

Claims 3-7, 9-11, and 13 stand rejected as being either anticipated or being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,357,187 to Stanley et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,756,938 to Hickman, and U.S. Patent No. 5,904,020 to Carlson et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the present rejections. However, in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicant has canceled Claims 3-7, 9-11, and 13 without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, the present rejections are moot.

Additionally, Applicant has also canceled Claims 8, 12, and 14, which were previously withdrawn from consideration. Applicant expressively reserves the right to further prosecute the original versions of Claims 3-14 through continuation practice.

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CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims and specification. Accordingly, early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is most earnestly solicited.

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve such issue promptly.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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